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## Some problems of psychological counseling and guidance system in Turkey

Kenan Sevinc<sup>a\*</sup>, Sibel Tasci<sup>a</sup>, Elif Demir<sup>c</sup><sup>a</sup>Research Assistant, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Canakkale 17100, Turkey<sup>b</sup>Assistant Director, TOKI High School, Canakkale 17100, Turkey<sup>c</sup>Turkish Teacher, Fennur Sozen Primary School, Canakkale 17100, Turkey

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### Abstract

Student personality services are the most important part of the guidance and counseling services. These services are the best indicator which school is just not a place that provides students' academic development. To provide consulting services is very important for the student's self-realization, become aware of the latent forces and establish healthy relationships with other people as a social entity. Turkey is influenced by USA to create a system of guidance and psychological counselling. The staff who carries out this work in public school, is called as Guidance Teacher. There are some problems, which are qualitative and quantitative deficiencies, about regarding the execution of works by Guidance Teachers. In this study, the findings, found by using litterateur scanning method, are reviewed. Especially qualitative deficiencies are addressed on the basis of guidance teachers.

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### 1. Introduction

The impact of Americans on psychology can't be underestimated. Being declared as psychology professor In 1888, James Mckeen Cattell was the first one to get this title. This event determined the homeland of psychology as USA. The effect of Americans on psychology was perceived day by day after the foundation of APA (American Psychology Association) in 1892. Just after the declaration of psychology as a new discipline, it began to develop in USA. Superiority of USA at psychology, which continues nowadays, has come about those days (Schultz & Schultz, 2001: 29). First counselling bureau was founded by Frank Parsons in 1908 in Boston. In 1929 the first professional counselling was started by the psychologist Paul Bahnsen (Duygu, 2000: 12). However, all those process were about occupation and employing. Those bureaus, we can say, worked as human sources companies. In the means of our time, school and youth counselling have begun after the year 1975. In 1947, when APA parted into divisions, 17th division was founded as The Division of Counselling and Guidance and in 1952, 17th division changed its name as Counselling Psychology (Nelson-Jones, 1982: 196). Despite the fact that the terms such as counselling, counselling psychology, school counselling etc. didn't have the same meaning, counselling services were applied as a part of the

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\* Kenan SEVINC. Tel.: +90 286 218 00 18 - 1459

E-mail address: [kssevinc@gmail.com](mailto:kssevinc@gmail.com)

student personality services at schools in mainly USA and most of the other countries after the second half of the 20th century.

In Turkey, in 1950s, as a result of the impact of the USA, Guidance and Research Centers have begun to be founded. In 1965, under the name of Ankara University, Educational Psychology and Guidance undergraduate program was founded, psychological counselors were appointed to some schools in 1970 and after 1980, undergraduate programs were founded in most of the universities (Korkut, 2004: 13). In Turkey counselling, like the USA, was developed in education faculties instead of psychology undergraduate programs. First undergraduate programs were founded under the name of Guidance and Counselling in education faculties (Whiteley, 1984: 60). In Turkey, the name of Guidance and Psychological Counselling programs has taken place in OSYM (SSPC: Student Selection and Placement Center) guidebooks firstly in 1983 (Özyürek, 2010: 162). In Turkey, the graduates of Guidance and Psychological Counselling (GPC) programs were appointed to the primary and secondary schools' or some private teaching institutions' and some universities' psychological guidance and counselling departments. For that reason, we can say that they are raised as school counselors (Ültanır, 2005: 107). Nowadays in Turkey, education faculties raise the counselors for primary and secondary schools. They are named as "guidance teacher" by the Ministry of National Education (MNE). However, guidance teachers prefer using the title "psychological counselor".

In Turkey, under the control of MNE, organization of GPC services has a 50 years of history. However, it has not been qualified enough in terms of functionality and importance of services, quality of counselors and quantitative sufficiency of them (Selen, 2008:5). In this study, it is aimed to focus on some of the problems of GPC services served by guidance teachers or in another saying "psychological counselor", and on deficiencies sourced from guidance teachers. The findings, found by using literature scanning method, are reviewed and present problems are divided into two as qualitative and quantitative deficiencies.

## 2. Counselling and Guidance Services

We should emphasize especially formal education for its contribution to personal-social progress of human being, instead of its pure information transfer. For that reason, student personality services are as important as educational services. Student personality service, which is a modern kind of education and management functions, should take place in a good education system to protect the youth's physical and mental health and increase their adaptation power (Kılıçcı, 2006: 182). We can put student personality services into such an order: guidance and counselling, health services, social welfare activities, private education and raising, leisure time education and social activities (Kılıçcı, 2006: 182). We should emphasize especially guidance and counselling. We can define guidance as a process which includes assists of experts to make persons reach their aim to be productive and happy individuals whom modern world needs. The final aim of that process is the individual's self-realization. The service field which is the main item to organize all those aims effectively is called counselling (Erkan, 2004:1).

According to Lewis, counselling is a process of an individual's realizing his own problems, learning a way out and being enlightened by another individual who is not a member of his environment (Duygu, 2000: 13). "Counselling is a service sector which is sourced from needs of humanity. For that reason, it can't stay completely away from individual's mental problems. Counselor may be forced to enter the field of mental therapy while determining mental and social reasons which constitute individual's personality and his problems. Goals of psychologists and counselors are not so different from each other." (Duygu, 2000: 13). Counselling is a psychological process, because the nature of aims of counselling is psychological and also theories, which those aims are based on, take their source from psychology. Psychological research also contributes to both theories of counselling and evaluation of counselling results and counselling process. However, the individuals whom are served by counselors are the ones who are not in the environment of medicine and who don't have chronic problems (Nelson-Jones, 1982: 2). For it cannot be dissociated from psychology, that career field is named as counselling psychologist or counselor etc. . Not similar to occupation fields such as psychiatrist or psychologist, counselors are not occupied in medicine field. One of their main fields is school. It is considered that in counselling process, there are two sides (counselor and client) and the one who serves the counselling service at school is called counselor. However, it would be true to state that there may be more than two sides as counselor, consultant and client. According to Caplan, counselor is a professional and there is a employee between counselor and client who is called consultant. Consultants usually don't have the education and knowledge that counselors have and they can be

individuals who are professional or semi-professional in fields such as education, nursing, law or medicine. Consultants deal with stuff about work more than personal problems which form a base for interviews about counselling. Counselling has got two aims; to assist consultant in solving the problems professionally and to prepare consultant for handling with the same kind of problems without the assist of counselor (Erchul and Martens, 2010: 12). Consultant is the person who meets students one to one and contacts them directly and offers solutions to them. Counselor supports the consultant or consultants.

We may probably be confused about the terms in that point, because the terms “counselling” and “consulting” have the same meaning in Turkish and both are the duties of guidance teachers. In the 50th line of the Regulation of The Ministry of National Education Guidance and Psychological Counselling Services, the duties of guidance teachers are mentioned as: to prepare the program of the guidance services of the school, to guide the other teachers, to organize individualistic guiding services, to organize individual recognition techniques, and counselling. Counselling is conducted by guidance teachers and there is no other consultant at schools. However, as it is clear in Caplan’s definition, counselor is a professional psychologist and supports the consultant. In Caplan’s definition, consultant is someone who is consulted for advice (oxforddictionaries.com). However, in Turkey, guidance teacher can be seen as all counselling psychologist, counselling and consultant. “In Turkey, roles and functions of counselors are not very clear, which may cause chaos and obstructions about what are those roles and functions.” (Korkut Owen and Owen, 2008: 217). It is seen that chaos has an important role in solving the problems about the system.

### 3. Quantitative Deficiencies

Implemental deficiencies and even locality deficiencies are in the first line of the quantitative deficiencies. Some of the guidance teachers use teachers’ room or even serving rooms as special area. Lack of computer, printer, internet, phone, chairs etc. may occur. However, the most important deficiency is the lack of guidance teacher. According to a research of Taskaya and Kurt (2010: 912), classroom teachers think that the initial reason of problems in GPC services is lack of guidance teachers at primary schools. Because of the lack of guidance teachers, MNE appoints graduates of different fields such as philosophy or sociology. For instance, MNE, in its 2004/65 number memorandum, has declared that there would be guidance teacher appointments from different fields. Because, according to that memorandum, there are 550 students per guidance teacher in some cities while there are 4255 students in some other cities. However, according to regulations of MNE, 250 students are needed to appoint a guidance teacher for primary schools and 150 for secondary schools. If that quantity reaches 500 and multiples of 500, another guidance teacher is appointed for each. According to the statistics of MNE in 2011, there are 16.845.528 students at pre-school classes, primary schools and secondary schools which means 67.382 guidance teachers, who will be responsible for 250 students, are needed. Once again when we consider pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, 69.684 buildings exist. If we consider that each school needs at least one teacher, 69.684 teachers are needed. We can see that whether it is calculated on the number of students or numbers of buildings, over 60.000 teachers are needed. Even though total number of guidance teachers is not mentioned by MNE, it has declared that there is a lack of guidance teacher and there is no doubt that current number of guidance teachers is much more less than we mentioned above.

The reason why deficit of guidance teachers is so big is the late foundation and spreading of those undergraduate programs and the number of graduates’ not meeting the needs. It is recognized that the number of the 4th grade students of GPC undergraduate programs of 19 universities all over Turkey is 985 in the 2005/2006 season (Ozyurek, 2010: 164). According to information from MNE General Manager of Human Sources, the number of appointed guidance teachers is 743 (ikgm.meb.gov.tr). If the information is analyzed, quota for GPC programs is 1300 students (22 universities) in 2007 (2007 SSPC guidebook). In 2011, 2923 students are accepted to GPC programs of state universities (38 universities) in Turkey (2011 SSPC guidebook). The number of appointed guidance teachers in 2011 is 1402 according to MNE (ikgm.meb.gov.tr). When it is considered that the graduates of 2011 were accepted to university in 2007, it can approximately be determined how many of them were appointed. Even though that quota is totally fitted and all of the students graduated in normal time period, the number of graduates is not enough to fit the number of appointments.

We can say that because solutions of quantitative deficiencies are clear and resolvable, they are less important than qualitative deficiencies. For that reason, we should especially focus on qualitative problems.

#### 4. Qualitative Deficiencies

Counselling is one of the duties of the guidance teachers. Counselling service assists students to raise the level of self responsibility, understand and accept himself as he is. Another aim of a guidance teacher is to make school atmosphere (aura) a better place for students' emotional and academic development. We can call it difference agency. In another saying, creating conditions to affect students positively and backing up students' socio-psychological development lie beneath guidance teacher's duties, either they are counselling or others. It is said that supplying a positive condition to create a good student-teacher interaction is one of the most important aims of other teacher except for guidance teachers. In that condition, it is aimed to make students not only academically successful but also feel that school is a warm and safe environment for themselves. In that condition, teacher would be an educator who gives more importance to students emotions, tries harder to know about them, listens and talks to them more, praises them and smiles to them more (Erkan, 2004: 10). In fact, these are the same aims of guidance teachers. However, guidance teachers have trouble in being acceptable and creating a warm and open environment.

In those days, it is aimed not only to raise students' academical knowledge but also to make them more communicative, self confident, aware of his/her abilities, compatible human beings. There is not a syllabus to provide those. The only thing to provide that environment is the GPC system. However, this system has difficulty in taking the duty out of service. "In order to create connection, expected during counselling between student and teacher, there should be a relationship good enough to make student feel safe, close, friendly, honest, realistic and humanistic" (Tan, 1992: 95). According to Basaran's research (2008: 162) classroom teachers expect guidance teachers to learn about students' emotional sides. However, they thought that GPC services are so formal that guidance teachers are having trouble in creating a friendly environment. Besides, according to Unal and Unal's research (2010: 936) some students may find guidance teachers terrifying. In Polat's research (2007: 42-43), it is found out that students go to the services according to their socio-economic level. The students, whose level is lower, are more unwilling. When we consider total of Turkey, students are generally at low socio-economic level. For that reason, more informal methods are needed. In Polat's same research (2007: 65), undetermined students who have the thought of "i am shy about going to the guiding service when i need psychological support" exist. That makes us think that the students have prejudgment about GPC services. Mostly students are expected to come to the services by themselves; however, some other occasions can be seen that guidance teacher calls them to the service. In both situations, it is possible for students to be recessive. Another important reason of them being recessive is that as it is stated in the 41st line of discipline regulations of MNE, the student who is in disciplinary action is forced to go the service and write a report about his/her thoughts.

"Counselling is much more client-centered than therapist-centered, emphasize the relation instead of specific techniques, based on applying of humanistic hypothesis more than behaviorist or psychoanalytic hypothesizes, instead of medicine, takes place out of medicine" (Nelson-Jones, 1982: 2). For that reason, it is needed to serve students a communication environment they can reach whenever they wish. In hypothesizes asserting this, the main one is humanism. One of the heading assertors of humanism, Rogers, emphasizes the necessity which counselor should create a free and stresses-free environment and respond client's feelings warmly (Altıntas and Gultekin, 2005: 83). "One of the most important qualifications of an effective and humanistic teacher is empathized understanding. That understanding can be provided neither by observation the student nor investigating his files carefully" (Kilicci, 2004: 47). No matter how many times the guidance teacher analyses the students' personal files and the test or survey results which students took via other teachers, he/she will not be able to support the students in solving problems. Most writers such as Rogers, Gordon, Carkhuff, Ivey, McWhirter and Voltan emphasize the importance of listening in order to develop child's self-respect and to create a well-supported connection. Gordon declines that when a child has got a problem, an effective listening to him would help the child solve it (Voltan Acar, 2004: 156). It is necessary to serve students an environment which is available anytime, to accept them as they are and listen to them carefully.

Another important problem about GPC is that it is possible to serve very little number of students in a little period of time. "According to a research in Ohio, it is found that counselling can work directly with students only in 40 % of their time" (Partin, 1993: quo., Korkut Owen and Owen, 2008: 211). In the research of Korkut Owen and Owen (2008: 215), it is seen that managements and teachers are in expectations such as guidance teachers' staying out of their room much, keeping in touch with more parents and teachers, solving the problems, which they mentioned about, more effectively.



Koos and Kefauver (1952) divides guiding in two according to the functions they serve as “adjustive” and “distributive”. McDaniel (1956) adds “adaptive function” to those two. Tan (1989) sees adjustive function as a function that appeals to some students with less but serious problems. Distributive function is about finding individual’s getting ready for the most proper future for himself and appeals to all students. Preparing education programs is the matter of adaptive function (Tan, 1989: 94). Adaptive function can be applied by co-operation of guidance teachers and school management. Guidance teacher needs support of some other teachers in order to apply distributive function for its appealing to all students, because applying that service to each student one by one takes up much time. This support can be using classroom teachers in duties which don’t require technical knowledge and special abilities such as collecting information, passing information to the memory of computer, adjusting measurements according to instructions or letting students know about results. However, interviewing with all students one by one personally is necessary which leads guidance teacher into an over-workload. When it comes to adjustive function, it would be much proper to apply it all students (whether they are having serious problems or not) instead of only some specific students who have serious problems, as it is the necessity of preventer guiding. In that situation, there will be a need for an assisting personnel. That assisting personnel can be used in subjects who don’t require an expert perspective such as orientation course, helping students’ in using school properties. Personal guiding is a solutionary service in every aspect. “It is seen that it doesn’t fit the understanding of modern education to do those kind of services only by school’s professional stuff (counselor, school psychologist etc.)” (Kaya ve Civitci, 2007: 118). For that reason, that kind of duty done by classroom teachers, who are not educated in subjects such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, history of science, wont be productive as well. As a compromise between them, the teachers who are educated in fields above can be proper for that duty.

It can be shown as the third qualitative deficiency that cultural and local elements haven’t been integrated enough to the system. GPC system in Turkey is mostly inspired from USA. However, counselling shouldn’t be divided from the cultural and social elements of which it is applied (Dogan, 2000: 62). “In the universities which psychological counselling are educated, applications in which cultural figuratives are used, research and approaches which discuss how to carry that country’s own historical and cultural heritage to application field are needed” (Altıntaş and Gultekin, 2005: 307). Taking cultural differences into consideration, multicultural counseling are propounded (Bektas, 2006: 47). However, forming a new system in a multi-cultural society and re-forming this system in a completely different country are pretty much different from each other. For that reason, it is possible that some problems may occur in transferring GPC system from USA to Turkey. “Islamic and Turkish culture is not a different culture to applications of psychological assistance service. It is obvious that amiable Turkish people, who like nature, discipline and order, and accustomed to living co-operatively, attach importance to human being” (Tan, 1992: 47). Turkish society, in the means of sociology field, live in communities and being a member of the society is more important than individuality. Instead of formal relations, informal relations are valuable and close communication is emphasized. All those differences are ignored in Turkish GPC system.

As the forth deficiency, guidance teachers are over-workloaded. It is not possible to become expert with an undergraduate education in all fields such as educational guiding, personal guiding, private education services, occupational guidance and career consultancy. One of the duties of guidance teachers is career consultancy. Even though it is a subject of graduate-degree in US, in Turkey it is a subject of GPC undergraduate program (Korkut, 2007: 188). According to information attained from Korkut’s research (2007: 193) it is stated that guidance teachers may need more information about occupational guidance. This situation is valid for most of the other fields such as career consultancy and occupational guidance.

After they start duty, teachers don’t re-new themselves and catch up with the renovations of the modern time. That is one of the most important problems of education system which involves guidance teachers as well. In a research consisting of thoughts of guidance teachers, made by Nazlı (2007: 9), it is stated that guidance teachers have trouble in evaluating education system as a whole and comprehending new paradigms. It is also mentioned that they think the renovations in education don’t meet the needs of students and they don’t know what the reasons are the renovations, even though they agree that renovations are needed (Nazlı, 2007: 11). Guidance teachers’ occupational development shouldn’t stop in order to increase the level of GPC services at schools (Nazlı, 2007: 12).

Deficiencies in raising guidance teachers can be the sixth problem. “Gultekin and Arıcıoğlu (2009) searched on guidance teachers whose 91% graduated from GPC/EPH about consultation. Most of the attendees (71%) mentioned that they were educated about consultation via classes they took during their undergraduate degree. However, only 44% of them found that education effective. Those findings show parallelism with other research findings (for

example: Dogan and Erkan, 2001; Yerin Güneri, Büyükgöze Kavas and Koydemir, 2007) which emphasizes deficiencies in Turkish GPC system (Ozyurek, 2010: 171). Similarly, in the findings of Uslu and Ari's research (2005: 515), it is determined that psychological listening and counselling abilities of guidance teachers are weak. According to Hatunoglu and Hantunoglu (2006: 515), deficiencies of guidance teachers in academical knowledge and talent reflect on their duty which blocks their guiding service. Their working field, being defined very wide, may be one of the main reasons of their deficiencies in serving their duty. It should be clarified if the guidance teachers are guides, consultants or counselor. It is seen that there is not a clear definition about guidance teachers. This can be the seventh deficiency. According to Selen's findings (2008: 32), "school counselling should be clarified as an occupation and it is usually emphasized in local or global books or articles that role and duties of guidance teacher should be clarified in order to serve PGPC services more efficiently at schools. In the studies, the role of guidance teacher and expectations from GPC services are not understood by students, teachers, and managements or even by guidance teachers." "When the studies abroad are analyzed, we can say that people have expectations from counselor and GPC service if the definition of roles and duties of counselor are not clarified. That situation creates the question about what they are doing. In time, that question has turned into whether GPC services are effective or not. When the research is analyzed, we can see that they focus on the necessity of clarifying the roles and duties of guidance teachers in order to answer these questions. In order to answer the questions about serviceability and effectiveness with tangible data, it is emphasized that there should be an efficient evaluation system" (Selen, 2008: 51). Being evaluable is very initial in GPC services. However, there is not a systematic research in how to evaluate the GPC services in Turkey. Besides, guidance teachers don't give importance to the subject about how GPC services should be evaluated (Taylı, 2008: 135-137). Even though a report of functions is prepared every end of the year, there are deficiencies in analyzing these reports and giving feedback. It can be seen clearly when we take the over-workload of the Guidance and Research Centers which are responsible for those analysis and feedbacks. Because, according to MNE Guidance and Research Centers' regulations, in allocation units whose population is not over 20.000 can a center work and those centers work mostly on detecting, diagnostics and settlements about special education services. For the school managements don't have educated personal about the subject, they can not control the works of guidance teachers. The same situation is valid for educational inspectors. Only the ministry inspectors and educational inspectors who are educated about GPC are able to control them effectively. A research which gives place to ideas of ministry inspectors about school GPC system shows that the inspectors can determine the problems of system efficiently. According to that research, made by Guven (2009: 175), we can line some of the negative views of the ministry inspectors as: guidance teacher's deficiency of communication with school management and teachers, scarcity or lack of guidance teachers at most of the schools, leaving a lot of time for documental works, doing everything as documentary, limiting the works to work hours, deficiency in ability and knowledge of teachers, not producing enough solutions about students problems, not getting in a close relationship with students, implemental deficiencies, guidance teachers' too much staying in their rooms, teachers' not fulfilling their duty, not interviewing with students individually, lack of studies including all students, guidance teachers' lack of communication with students, guidance teachers' thinking themselves as superior to other teachers. As we can see, there is a similarity between datas from most of the research and ministry inspectors' views. Some of them are unclear definition of guidance teaching, deficiencies during undergraduate education, over-workload from different fields, lack of renovations of teachers after starting to duty, lack of efficient and warmed communication environment with students, problems about availability, and lack of differentiation between counselling and consultancy in addition to quantitative deficiencies.

## 5. Conclusion

An extensive research showing insufficiency of GPC has not been done in Turkey yet. The research and the criticisms concentrate on guidance teacher as a person. Serving areas of school GPC services are programming-planning, orientation, student recognition service, giving information, counselling, group counselling, canalizing and entrenching, transferring, following, consultancy, environment and family relationships and research-assessment (Cam, 2007: 52). These services do not seem possible to be continued productively by one hand. The services, requiring special proficiency (such as counseling), are needed to be executed by whom are educated in that field (such as guidance teachers). In the other fields (giving information, sending, following, consultancy, environment and family relationships) these tasks may be given to who charged especially for this duty.

It is legally accepted that one of the most important task of guidance teachers is the counselling. However, as Silaci (2010: 129) stated, being subjected to psychological counselling at the end of four-year undergraduate education should also be queried. In Turkey, people who graduate from education faculties, are disposed to work as psychological counselor instead of working as consultant, even though they are not counselling psychologists. Caplan describes people who will take part between counselor and student or student groups as consultant. Consultancy is counted as a duty of guidance teachers in Turkey. In case of positioning guidance teachers as counselor, more consultants will be needed at schools. A new employee group can be contemplated, who can work under the supervision of counselor, and can keep in touch with students all the time, and educated in communication, psychology, sociology, philosophy, science history, religion psychology and forth so, and will be close to students, and can meet out of intimate and formal procedures, and is accessible all the time. Another solution is that guidance teachers work instead of that group of employees and a counselling psychologist can be appointed for each school.

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